

DARTON
URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health,

RAMSAY MILLER, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.,

1925.

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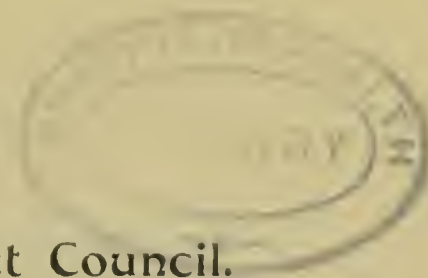
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To the Darton Urban District Council.

GENTLEMEN,

I have again the honour of placing before you the Annual Report on the Health and Sanitary condition of the District.

The area of the District is 4,361 acres, and includes Barugh 1,438 acres, Darton 1,879 acres, and Kexbro' 1,544 acres. The population of these areas was, in 1921, 10,719 persons, made up as follows :—Barugh 3,455, Darton 7,264, and Kexbro' 547. The total estimated population in 1925 was 11,830. This is probably rather low, the increased number of houses in Kexbro' having led to a great influx of people.

The number of inhabited houses in 1921 was 2,616. In the five years following the number of houses built was as follows :—

1921	...	9	(1 at Darton, 8 at Kexbro').
1922	...	168	(80 at Darton, 124 at Gawber Road, 14 at other places).
1923	...	32	(20 at Kexbro', 12 at Gawber and Darton).
1925	...	224	(including 200 at Darton W).

The total valuation in the Poor Law Lists is for this last year £37,389, while the assessable value for District Rate is £26,205, the product of a penny rate being £109 3s. 9d.

The male inhabitants are mainly engaged in the mining industry. There are a few employed in chaplet works, machine tooth works and in nail making. A certain number are, of course, engaged in agriculture, but these form unfortunately a very small proportion of the total. The female workers are employed in various mills both inside and outside the district. These mills are woollen, cotton and rug weaving factories. The machine tooth works also employ a few, and there are a certain number of domestic servants. Probably domestic service is a healthier occupation than mill working, and is certainly calculated to equip girls better for the business of housekeeping, which they all take up one time or another.

As a class miners are healthy, and generally speaking the adverse influences on health, especially in the case of young men, do not come into play during work, but in their spare time. I should say that adolescents are prematurely and excessively occupied with sex affairs, and that more shipwrecks occur from this than from work. I suppose it is difficult to get much intellectual

satisfaction from hewing and filling coal in the darkness of the mine, and it requires considerable spirit to overcome the numbing effect of their occupation and for the miners to develop their minds and increase their interest in life by devoting their spare time to the cultivation of the humanities.

It is unfortunate that the earnings of the miners show a tendency to fall, for where the struggle for existence is too severe the amenities of life are less likely to be observed. I do not think that this reduction has had much or any adverse effect on the health of the population so far, but it certainly has reduced the enjoyments that make life in a mining area tolerable and perhaps even agreeable. A few years ago a fair number of the population could go for a week to the sea-side with great benefit to the bodies and minds of old and young, but in these lean times that is for most impossible. In short life is decidedly more difficult and its problems more acute than five years ago, and it is not easy to see how the standard is to be regained.

POPULATION.—This was estimated at the middle of 1925 as 11,830, possibly as I have said an underestimate. Recently the population has been increased by fresh arrivals from various parts of the country. These people bring new ideas and fresh ways, and it will be of interest to note whether the Yorkshire standard of cleanliness and domestic economy will be affected by them. Already it is possible to notice the decrease in home-baked bread and the increase in make-shift meals and the patronage of the confectioner. This means an increase in expense of feeding and a decrease in the food value of the meals.

BIRTH RATE.—During the year there were registered 293 Births, made up of 148 males and 145 females. Of these three males and five females were born illegitimate. The Birth Rate was 24·7 of the estimated population per annum, the rate for the previous year being 27·7. The Birth Rate for England and Wales during 1925 was 18·3. The complexity of modern life is reflected here as all over the country in the decreased rate. The illegitimate Birth Rate was 2·4 per 100 infants born.

DEATH RATE.—The total number of deaths was 134 ; of these 70 were males and 64 females. The Death Rate was 12·2 per 1,000, the same as the figure for England and Wales, an increase on last year's rate, which was 10·7. This increase is mainly accounted for by the rise in the Infant Mortality Rate, as I shall show later. While in 1924 there were no deaths from Measles, Scarlet Fever, Whooping Cough, and Diphtheria, in 1925 there were 9 deaths from these diseases, viz., 4 from Measles, 2 from Scarlet Fever,

1 from Whooping Cough, and 2 from Diphtheria. Influenza caused 9 deaths, a decrease of 3 from the previous year. Tuberculosis also caused 9 deaths, which is about the usual number. Seven people died from Cancer, and 20 from diseases of the heart and blood vessels.

Respiratory diseases, which in 1924 were responsible for 21 deaths, caused in 1925 24 deaths. One death was due to child-birth and 4 to violence. Congenital conditions, mainly debility at birth, premature birth and malformations are put down as the cause of 18 deaths, all among infants.

INFANT MORTALITY.—It is to be regretted that the figure for this is not nearly so favourable as last year at first sight, though analysis of the deaths shows that as far as preventable deaths are concerned there is not much difference.

Among infants under the age of 12 months there were 30 deaths, the mortality rate being 112 per 1,000 children born. There was an exceptional number of deaths from premature birth and congenital causes, deaths which may be reckoned non-preventable. Nine of the deaths were due to premature birth and nine to other congenital causes, making a total of 18. This leaves 12 deaths of infants due to preventable causes. With more facilities for treatment many of these 18 might have been saved. How far one ought to go in thwarting nature in her desire to keep the race healthy is a difficult point. Here most people will, I think, agree that her decision is a wise one.

The following table shows the ages and causes of death of these infants :—

CAUSES.	0-1 week	1-2 weeks	2-3 weeks	3-4 weeks	Total.	1-3 mths	3-6 mths	6-9 mths	9-12 mths	Total.
Premature Birth...	8	...	1	...	9	...	...	...	...	9
Convulsions ...	...	2	...	...	2	1	...	...	...	3
Whooping Cough ..	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	1
Bronchitis.....	...	...	...	2	2	...	...	...	1	3
Diphtheria ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
Diarrhœa ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	2
Pneumonia ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
Other Congenital Causes...	5	...	...	1	6	3	...	...	...	9
Septic Throat	...	...	...	...	...	..	1	...	...	1
Totals.....	18	2	1	3	19	5	2	—	4	30

The Welfare Centres both at Mapplewell and Gawber continue to be well attended. A considerable number of mothers from Darton and Kexbro' make their way to Mapplewell. The increase in population in Darton almost demands the establishment of a Centre for itself. Such a Centre would supply the needs of Woolley Colliery as well, itself a considerable village now. A great deal of the success of the Centres is due to the work of Nurse Carr and Nurse Snowden, whose reports are as follows :—

MAPPLEWELL AND STAINCROSS CENTRE (Nurse Carr)—The year has not been interrupted by epidemics and industrial troubles, and in consequence the work at this Centre progressed steadily, the number of attendances during the last two months being the largest recorded, and this in spite of the fact that the sale of dried milk is comparatively small. A debt of gratitude is due to the voluntary helpers who turn up so regularly and work so assiduously at this Centre. They made a great success of the Jumble Sale. Thanks are also due to those who sent gifts. The proceeds have been used for various purposes in connection with the Centre, and there remains a balance in the bank for use as required. In November part of the money in hand was used for a successful Lantern Lecture in Darton.

A trained Midwife is now resident at Mapplewell, and her services are becoming more and more in demand.

For the first time in this area the Medical Inspection of school children was made by a woman. The services of a school dentist are now available. Owing to the increased population in Darton West the home visiting has greatly increased. Amongst the babies who died in the first year of life only two had been to the Centre, and in each case only once. In a large number of cases the mothers had not been visited, the babies dying a few hours after birth. It is desirable that pregnant mothers should notify the nurses of the fact. Some timely advice would save them both ill-health and risk in their confinements.

GAWBER CENTRE (Nurse Snowden)—In the Higham and Barugh area there were eight deaths of babies under one year of age. Of these six died from feebleness at birth, one from whooping cough, and one from bronchitis. There were eight still-births in the area during the year, and one mother died from child-birth at Gawber.

There have been fewer cases of bronchitis among babies than in previous years, due to the increased knowledge among mothers of the importance of fresh air and sunshine. There were no deaths of babies who had attended the Clinic. The Centre has been well attended during the year, and the average health of the babies is distinctly higher.

The School Clinic has provided treatment for an average of 14 children each week throughout the year. The annual Medical Inspection was held in December, 1925. Fewer defects were discovered than in previous years. By far the most frequent was decayed and septic teeth, and many of these were treated at Barugh Green School by the school dentist. Other noticeable defects were enlarged tonsils and adenoids and defective vision. Parents are now much more willing to avail themselves of hospital treatment for these than formerly. The children were found to be notably clean, and verminous conditions were rare.

During the year epidemic diseases have prevailed as follows :—Mumps at Barugh Green, Whooping Cough at Higham, Low Barugh and Barugh Green, and Chicken-pox at Gawber and Kexbro', while there were a few cases of Measles at Barugh Green. There is now a resident Midwife and Nurse at Barugh Green. There is much bad housing at Gawber and Low Barugh, and it is almost impossible for mothers to rear healthy children under the conditions that prevail.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.—The following table shows the notifications of infectious diseases received from the various parts of the district :—

	Barugh.	Darton.	Mapplewell.	Kexbro'	Total.
Tuberculosis of Lungs ...	9	3	8	...	20
Tuberculosis of other parts ...	1	...	6	...	7
Pneumonia ...	7	11	17	3	38
Diphtheria ...	4	5	1	...	10
Scarlet Fever ...	7	22	22	3	54
Ophthalmia of the New Born ...	1	...	...	...	1
Erysipelas ...	1	4	8	...	13
Enteric ..	...	...	1	...	1
Totals ...	30	45	63	6	144

Scarlet Fever, mainly of a mild type, continued to crop up during the year, mainly in Darton and Mapplewell. Two deaths occurred from this disease. The number of notification of Tuberculosis was appreciably smaller during the year, though the number of deaths from this disease does not vary much.

A Report on the prevalence of Tuberculosis in the area was called for by the Ministry of Health. This was submitted. The conclusions come to were as follows :—

1. That Tuberculosis of the Lungs is a very difficult disease to diagnose in its early stages.
2. Consequently many cases are notified which are not any rate clinically tuberculosis.
3. That there is no excessive prevalence of the disease in this district as shown by the number of deaths occurring from it.
4. That so much depends on the personal view of even the most conscientious doctors that it is very easy to exaggerate the importance of notification.
5. That cases of bone and glandular tuberculosis show uniformity throughout the district, while the excess of pulmonary notifications come from one area.

It is satisfactory to note that no case of Puerperal Sepsis was notified, while there was only one case of Enteric Fever.

GENERAL SANITARY CONDITION OF THE DISTRICT.

WATER SUPPLY.—This has been satisfactory during the year both in quantity and quality, and has no action on lead pipes. During the past five years there has been no serious interruption in the service. The Council have, however, felt that with the increase in population and the development of the water carriage system it would be no longer safe to count on there being no failure in the supply. It was therefore decided to construct a service reservoir containing a reserve of one million gallons, sufficient for six days' supply. At the end of the year this was nearing completion. There was always a certain amount of anxiety in case there happened to be a breakdown. This has now to a great extent been removed. To ensure a better flow of water the old mains have been replaced in parts of the district with new ones of a larger calibre, at a cost of nearly £20,000. All the new houses have been supplied with water, new mains having been laid on the Darton Housing Estate, where the 200 houses have been fitted with baths and water closets. The inhabitants are now assured of an ample and constant supply at a charge of 4d. per week for houses under £10 rateable value.

DAY SCHOOLS.—The 11 Day Schools have been visited several times by the Sanitary Inspector and myself. The defects noticed, chiefly blocked drains and urinals, broken fall pipes and defective spouts, were reported to the Managers and remedied.

Six Water Closets are to be installed at the Gawber Infants' School in place of the existing privies.

A new School is urgently needed at Kexbro'. Plans have been passed for one to accommodate 300 scholars, but nothing is yet done. It is important that there should be another School before next winter.

The Gawber Day Schools appear to be overcrowded.

While the playground of Darton Council School has been asphalted, those at Kexbro' and Gawber are still soil surfaces.

OVERCROWDING.—There is still considerable overcrowding, though a number of cases have been abated by removal into new houses in the district, as well as outside the Council's area. The high rents of the houses recently built deter many who are at present living in insanitary or overcrowded dwellings from removing. There is, I think, a need for houses of a smaller type with lower rents, suitable for people without families or with only one or two young children.

SLUM AREAS.—Nothing further has been done in this matter. The inhabitants of houses in these parts say that they are unable to afford the rents demanded for the newer and larger type of house. Of the fourteen for which closing orders were made some time ago ten are still occupied, two are in ruins and two are closed. The roofs of some of the houses at Broadroyd Head are very dilapidated, and failing repair the houses should be closed. At Furnace Bottom, where five were condemned, the owner has done his best to render them temporarily inhabitable.

MORTUARY.—Considerable use has been made of this during the past year. Some prejudice exists among people with regard to the removal of bodies from homes where the accommodation is limited, even where there is no question of an examination. I suggest that a cupboard be provided, with supply of clean towels, soap, glass jars, and other vessels.

HOSPITALS, etc.—Infectious diseases, except Small-pox, are treated at Kendray Joint Hospital. The Small-pox Hospital is at Lund Wood. In epidemic times there has been some delay in the removal of Scarlet Fever cases. General hospital cases are treated mainly at Beckett's Hospital and Leeds Infirmary. Venereal diseases are treated at Queen's Road V. D. Dispensary. There is no satisfactory method of dealing with complicated Midwifery cases. Ordinary cases can, as a rule, be admitted as paying patients to Barnsley and Wakefield Maternity Homes, while some are referred to the Workhouse Infirmary, though this last is not popular

simply through prejudice. But complicated cases have to be treated at home, and the wonder is that practitioners and midwives get as good results as they do.

Cases of Accident are removed to Hospital by the various Colliery ambulances, horse or motor. Fever cases are removed by the Hospital motor ambulance, while the others are dealt with by the Urban District motor ambulance.

SLAUGHTER HOUSES AND BUTCHERS' SHOPS.—There are eleven licensed Slaughter Houses with the urban area. These have been regularly visited by the Sanitary Inspector and have been found satisfactory. Of the number four are used as Butchers' Shops. In the case of three other Butchers' Shops the meat sold is killed at Barnsley.

BAKE-HOUSES.—There are four of these in the district. None of them are underground. All are kept clean and the bread made under good conditions.

OFFENSIVE TRADES.—There is only one in the Urban Area—a tripe boiling establishment, and its condition is quite satisfactory.

HOUSE INSPECTION AND REPAIRS.—The total number of houses examined during the year was 132. Their condition was as follows :—

Found satisfactory	...	...	...	41
With various minor defects	...	...	...	86
With much more serious defects	...	...	...	4
Unfit for habitation	...	...	...	1

The main defects noted were smoky chimneys, lack of, or, broken spouts, choked fall pipes, broken ventilating pipes, choked gullies, and blocked branch drains. Many of the older houses are damp, a condition that often seems impossible to remedy. If the inmates would ventilate the damp rooms in all weathers it would, at least, mitigate the condition. Complete cure in the case of many old houses built near the river is, however, impossible. Unfortunately many of these houses are inhabited by large families, which means overcrowding, and a low average subsistence allowance. The number of houses repaired during the year was 98. The total number of houses examined during the past five years was 827. The total number repaired during that time was 639. Out of the number examined 176 were found satisfactory in every respect. The balance represents houses that will be closed when housing conditions are normal. New houses have been erected during the year 1925 as follows :—

	Number.
In Darton and Kexbro'	200
All with Baths, Water Closets and Gardens.	
Bungalows in Bakehouse Yard, Gawber ...	6
Bungalow in Huddersfield Road	1
Bungalows in Barugh Lane	2
Houses in Barnsley Rd. & Agnes Rd., Darton	12
One conversion of a Garage	1
One conversion of one into two houses at	
Barugh Green	1
	224

During the past five years the number of new houses erected is as follows :—

Year.	Number.
1921	9
1922	168
1923	32
1924	7
1925	224
Total	440

RUBBISH TIPS.—The Council own three tips, one at Gawber, one at Bloomhouse, and one at Blacker Hill. The temporary tip at the bottom of Beevor Lane, Gawber, has been discontinued. The deposition of organic refuse on tips should be discouraged. Not only does it encourage rats, but it smells offensively in warm weather. All organic refuse should be burned in the domestic fire, while refuse from the fish shops should be buried.

RECREATION GROUNDS.—There are four of these, one at Barugh Green, one at Higham, one at Mapplewell, and one at Darton. There seems to be something lacking in the organisation of these grounds. For instance that at Darton, though taken over a year ago, is still incomplete. Owing to the destruction of a great deal of the furnishings—swings, etc.—it is largely given over to young men for football. It is evident that a space for young children should be railed off, from which youths should be strictly excluded. A strong-willed caretaker should also be appointed.

PRIVIES, ASHPITS, etc.—There are now about 750 Privies and 7 Pail Closets in the district, but the number is steadily decreasing. The number of Conversions to Water Closets during the past five years is as follows :—

1921	...	...	4	Conversions.
1922	...	...	7	„
1923	...	...	9	„
1924	...	...	48	„
1925	...	...	21	„

This rate of conversion might with advantage be accelerated. There are 440 roofed and grated Ashpits, besides several open ashpits. There are 900 Water Closets in our area all supplied with fresh water.

COW-SHEDS AND MILK DEALERS.—There are 29 Cow-keepers in the district and 36 Cow-sheds. Most of the premises are kept in a satisfactory condition, and the condition of the farm yards has steadily improved. There are 11 Milk Purveyors. Improvements have been carried out at Haigh Hall Farm and Redbrook and Royd Hill Farms. Other work at different farms is contemplated.

As far as I know the condition of the Milk is satisfactory in the cool months of the year. In summer the supply will remain unsatisfactory until the twice a day system is re-established.

No Grade A Milk is produced in the district. It certainly seems an extraordinary idea to produce two kinds of milk, one more expensive, guaranteed tubercle and dirt free, and another cheaper but possibly dirty and germ laden. The very children who suffer most from tuberculosis contracted from impure milk belong to the class who are least likely to pay more for the guaranteed milk. So that the production of Grade A Milk does not touch the problem of the prevention of tuberculosis among children at all. It is regretted that the illness of Mr. A. Robinson, M.R.C.V.S., has prevented the completion of the inspection of Milk Cows in the district.

SEWERS AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL.—All the new houses built in the Darton Area have been connected with the Council's main Sewers with one exception. The main Sewer has been extended to the four Parsonage houses which have been connected up to it. The increase in the number of Water Closets in the district and the prospect of considerable acceleration of conversions from Privies has thrown, and will throw, a big strain on the present Sewage Works. The Council is fully aware, I know, of the need for developing them, and will no doubt deal with the question in the near future.

SCAVENGING.—On the whole this is much more efficiently done than was the case a few years ago. I have not received any complaints for some time. The sub-district, Gawber, which is let to a contractor, has not been so efficiently dealt with as Darton and Mapplewell. The matter has been looked into and remedied, and the work now proceeds smoothly. I do not, however, consider Scavenging lends itself to contract work, where it is usually looked on as a spare time job, and where it is apt to suffer when the contractor has other pressing work.

I am glad to be able to say that the nuisance of wheeled-out contents of Ashpits being deposited on the public highway prior to removal has been nearly entirely abated by the conversion of certain Privies to Water Closets. About 7,000 loads of night-soil, ashes and household refuse have been dealt with during the year. A covered conveyance for the removal of the contents of dust bins would be an advantage.

FACTORIES, WORKSHOPS AND WORK PLACES.—There are in the district one Smokeless Fuel Works, a Sensible Heat Works, four Chaplet and Stud Works, one Milliner's Work-room, one Tar Distillery, one Chemical Works, one Electric Generating Station, one Brickyard, one Steel Tooth Works, one Cotton Mill, and one Wagon Repairing Works. Swithen Chemical Works closed. These have been visited by the Sanitary Inspector, and are in a sanitary condition. The Cotton Mill at Redbrook (now closed) employed 80 females, while 150 are employed at the Darton Rug Factory. The sanitary arrangements at both of these places are satisfactory. These two Mills and the Brick-works are under the supervision of H.M. Inspector of Factories, who has not made any complaint to the Council of sanitary defect during the year. He has not found it necessary to make any remark on the quality of rags used or to the absence of any disinfection of them, no matter what their origin is.

I have to thank Mr. Taylor, your Sanitary Inspector, for his help both in my work and in the preparation of this Report.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

R. MILLAR.

8th June, 1926.



